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CAMILLE HOWELL

## Artist gives fiber life at one-woman show

OCTOBER 6, 2009

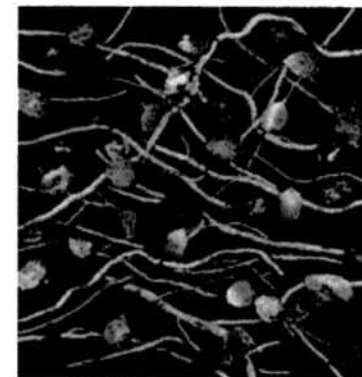
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When I first saw the publicity material on Barbara Cade, I thought she was a photographer. Her 2008 work "Patterns" resembled a photo of rocks peeking out through melting snow.

ADVERTISEMENT Then I looked closer and realized that it wasn't a photograph at all -- it was felt. Cade creates works of art out of fiber with pretty amazing results. She celebrates much that is beautiful around us, from gigantic pansies to falling leaves to fields of mountain wildflowers.

A one-woman show of her works currently at the Springfield Art Museum is unlike anything I can remember there. While we've had the opportunity to see some great fiber art shows in this area in the past, Cade gives us something entirely new, something you really have to see in person to experience fully. No photo does it justice.

Her show is one of three one-person exhibits running concurrently at the museum. There'll be more about the



"Salsa," a 2002 work by fiber artist Barbara Cade, is made of wool, paper, linen and acrylic. (Barbara Cade)

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said, "I think people need peaceful places, and I hope my landscapes can provide a peaceful escape for people."

As I write this, Ken Burns' PBS series, "National Parks: America's Best Idea" is on television in the background. The subject is the photographs of Ansel Adams and the writings of John Muir and on how art

other two in this column at a later date.

Cade's works, which fill a hallway and one of the museum's galleries, date back as far as the 1980s. Probably the best place to begin your exhibit viewing is with a photographic display of how the Hot Springs, Ark., artist creates her art.

In addition, there's a printed two-page interview, available in the gallery, which explains many of Cade's ideas. When she began working in felt, she lived on the West Coast, and many of her earlier pieces reflect that environment.

Now, she says, more and more pieces are based on her Arkansas home, as well as on places she has traveled, such as Finland.

I was able to make several trips to Finland a few years back, always in the fall or winter, when things were dark and cold. There was still a lot of beauty, however, from colorful birch leaves lying on hiking and skiing paths to towering, snow-covered evergreens. Seeing Cade's "Path to Lake Saimaa" brought memories of those visits flooding back.

In addition to her travels, Cade cites the late architect Frank Lloyd Wright as a huge influence in her work. His interest in both the nature of materials and in the use of natural materials has become part of Cade's central philosophy of art.

Cade says she wants to create art that makes her happy and fills her and others with a sense of peace. "With the world the way it is now," she

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can influence what people think and how they feel about nature.

How fitting, because that's just what Cade manages to do with her art.

The exhibit continues through Nov. 15 at the Springfield Art Museum, 1111 E. Brookside Drive. Gallery hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday; 9 a.m.-8 p.m. Thursday; 1-5 p.m. Sunday. For more information, call 837-5700 or visit [www.springfieldmo.gov/egov/art](http://www.springfieldmo.gov/egov/art).

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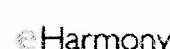
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